

Management Report

(taken from the monthly reports to the Trustees and Management Committee sent in by Will Dobson, until September, and Sholto Moger from October onwards, both of Strutt & Parker).

Grazing – Due to foot and mouth and blue tongue disease it has been a difficult year for the grazier as he has not been able to move his stock when he needed to. Spraying and topping have helped considerably to control the nettles and this will be continued.

Sluices, hatches, channels and drains – The water levels have been lower than was expected despite some good rain in the autumn. BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) and Sparsholt College have again both provided labour forces to dig out selected ditches. The restoration of sluices and hatches is now almost complete. Participation in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme run by Natural England is still on course to commence in April 2008.

Copses and tree works – Work on clearing the pathway through Rotary Copse is under way. The Cyril Gordon memorial oak was planted on 30 November in the meadow across the Town Path from Rose Cottage with members of his family present. Selected willow trees have received permission for pollarding and five replacement black poplars have been ordered for Joiners' Belt.

Town Path – Water flow has been adequate to keep the channel open. Clumps of Himalayan Balsam, which is a notifiable non-native invasive plant species, are growing in the bank and have been reported but so far nothing has been done about them. The new tarmac promised last autumn has still not materialised. The hope that it would have been done by the time this Newsletter was published has therefore proved to be false!

Rosemary Allen